CHAPTER III

SOUTH CAROLINA **ALONE.**

PRESIDENT BUCHANAN, as we have seen, had, In his Message to Congress on December 3, 1.8W), announced his intention of holding and, if necessary, defending the forts in the Southern States. This announcement caused the immediate resignation of the two members of his Cabinet from *tint* Cotton States,—Mr. Gobb of Georgia and Mr. Thompson of Mississippi,—but Mr. Buchanan saw them withdraw without hesitation, for, on the point that it was the duty of the Executive to maintain the existing hold of the Government on the forts in the seceding States, his mind was perfectly clear,

A more difficult question was that of reinforcing the forts. As early as October 27th General Scott had submitted to the President his famous " Vie\VH,[w] which, contained a recommendation to reinforce all the forts in the Cotton and Gulf States. But the troops at the disposal of the Administration were not numerous; and to collect them and carry out the recommendations of the General-in-chief would not

[1] Buchanan, p. no. Thompson, however, remained some* weeks, attending to the business of the office, and did not leave till the tjith of January, 1861.